

# THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—Cowper.



"STUPID WOMAN! IS THAT THE WAY YOU HAVE BEEN TAUGHT TO READ?"

## THE MORTONS OF MORTON HALL.

CHAPTER XII.—EXCITEMENT IN THE VILLAGE OF ST. DAVID.

MR. ASTON received a prompt and favourable reply to his letter. Mr. Sinclair stated that Cliff Cottage, which was the name of the dwelling to which Mr. Aston had alluded, might be engaged either for a few months or for a term of years, and that a few days would suffice to put it in perfect repair. Furniture, as Mr. Aston had said, could be easily procured from Falmouth, and though the engagement of suitable servants might be a somewhat difficult

matter, he (the rector) would use his best endeavours to procure the servants who would be required.

The rector and his niece both expressed their delight at the prospect of seeing Mr. Aston at St. David again, and invited him to come down forthwith and take up his abode in his old quarters at the Rectory, until the repairs going forward at the cottage were completed.

It was a stirring time at St. David. A very small matter suffices to create an excitement among the inhabitants of a secluded country village, and day after day, from dawn to nightfall, all the idlers and children of the village congregated around Cliff Cottage, and watched the

workmen as eagerly as if their own comfort and convenience depended upon the result of the various alterations and improvements that were being made.

Immediately after he had received Mr. Aston's letter Mr. Sinclair had sent directions to various tradesmen and shopkeepers at Falmouth, to commence and complete with all possible despatch the necessary repairs and alterations required at the cottage; and as the new tenant had declared that the cost was a matter of no consequence to him, these tradesmen and their employées were at work, busy as bees, from daylight until dark. Miss Wardour had been requested, and had promised to superintend the interior arrangements of the cottage, and the Falmouth upholsterers had received a *carte blanche* from Mr. Aston to furnish the rooms in suitable style, from cellars to attics, under the young lady's directions, without regard to expense. Gardeners were engaged to put the long-neglected gardens and shrubberies into perfect order; and the rector and Doctor Pendriggen, and even the new curate, Mr. Sharpe, each and all glad of some little change from the ordinarily quiet routine of their daily duties, occupied themselves in superintending the work, and were continually contradicting each other and themselves, and sometimes almost driving the gardener and his assistants frantic with their impracticable suggestions.

At this period Mary Talbot had been settled at St. David some five or six weeks, and had already won the respect and esteem of the rector and his friends.

With the exception of Doctor Pendriggen and Mr. Sharpe, there were no residents within the parish of St. David who were on terms of intimacy with the rector and his niece, the great body of the population consisting of poor farmers and poorer fishermen and their wives and families—good, honest folk in their way, but not of a class with whom persons of education and refinement could mingle on terms of social equality.

Nor were there any resident gentry in the immediate neighbourhood of St. David. Sir Charles Meldrum, an old Cornish baronet, and his lady and family, were, in fact, the only visitors from beyond the limits of the parish who ever made their appearance at the Rectory, and their visits were only paid at long intervals.

Meldrum Abbey, the seat of Sir Charles Meldrum, was ten miles distant from St. David, in the adjoining parish of St. Colomb, and usually the family came down from London to spend a month or two of the autumn at their seat in Cornwall.

On these occasions Miss Wardour was in the habit of passing a week or two at the Abbey with Lady Meldrum and her daughter, and during their stay the family generally came over to St. David, and spent a few days with the rector and his niece. At all other times Miss Wardour was absolutely isolated from the society of young persons of her own sex and age, and as it sometimes happened that the baronet and his family missed their usual visit to the Abbey, the young lady was on these occasions deprived of the holiday to which she had looked forward for months with eager anticipation.

It may therefore be readily imagined that while Mary Talbot was regarded by the rector and Doctor Pendriggen and Mr. Sharpe as an acquisition to the society of the little village, she was especially welcome to Miss Wardour, and that the two young ladies soon became intimate friends.

In his own parish Mr. Sinclair reigned paramount; and it would be well if every country parish in England were presided over by an autocrat of equal goodness and benevolence. Nevertheless, many of the clergy of the adjacent parishes smiled at what they termed the

Arcadian schemes of the worthy rector; and when they heard that he had engaged a young person of superior education to superintend his schools, they predicted the failure of his plans, as they had previously predicted the failure of various other philanthropic projects, which, however, had generally proved successful.

Even Doctor Pendriggen, who had a blunt habit of speaking his mind freely (acquired, probably, during his service on shipboard), which was apt to give offence to strangers, but which was tolerated and laughed at by those who knew his sterling qualities—even Doctor Pendriggen, I repeat, expressed his opinion to the rector that his present scheme was only calculated to turn the heads of the village girls, and render them unfit for the humble duties of their station.

The doctor was opposed to what he termed the over-education of the working classes.

"Teach them to read, and to write their names, and sum up their daily household expenses," he said, "and that's quite enough for girls whose lot it is to become the wives of farm labourers and fishermen. I don't know that it isn't too much. Their mothers and grandmothers got along without any education at all.

"Do tell me," he went on, "what this young lady whom you have engaged is to do? Is she to teach our rude honest fisher-girls fine ladyism, to teach them to dress smart, and waste their time in idleness, and scorn their humble homes, and rough, uneducated husbands—if they can find any honest hardworking men so foolish as to marry them?"

"On the contrary, my dear doctor," replied Mr. Sinclair, with a smile at the bluntness of his friend's speech, "I hope they will be taught *not* to waste their time in idleness, but to dress neatly, and to make the most of their humble homes, and to render their husbands happy and content with the comforts they can find at home, and thus keep them from spending their evenings in the alehouse. I hope," he continued, "that the new governess will instruct them by precept and example in those duties which are not generally taught within the walls of a school-room, and for that purpose I have engaged her. I have no fear of the result of the educational movement which is just beginning to make itself manifest in our land. I only regret that it has been so long delayed. I am aware that it is feared by many; but so has been every progressive movement from the earliest ages. Education, however humble, is a species of riches beyond the reach of misfortune. It cannot make itself wings and fly away from its possessor, and in my opinion, if it be properly imparted, so far from inducing the poor and lowly to neglect the rude yet necessary duties of humble life, it will lead them to strive to perform these duties more perfectly. I intend the young lady whom I have now engaged to teach the poor farm and village girls how to carry the instruction they receive at school into their homes, to teach them that their education need not and should not be ended when they quit school; and that intellectual culture is not incompatible with honest, humble labour.

"Moreover, Miss Talbot will be of great assistance to Miss Wardour in those parish duties which properly appertain to the clergyman's wife, but which, as I am not a married man, my niece has latterly undertaken to perform; and so far I am well satisfied with her zeal and ability."

"If your plan were generally followed," replied Doctor Pendriggen—partially convinced that the rector was right, yet unwilling to acknowledge that such was the case—"we should soon find none willing to be servants or to occupy menial situations. All would

want to be masters and mistresses, and society would become disorganised."

"I anticipate no such unhappy result," continued the rector. "The progress of one class of society necessitates the progress of all classes. I anticipate, therefore, no such social convulsion as you and others pretend to dread. At all events, I shall strive to do my duty to the utmost of my power, and shall endeavour to promote the temporal comfort and happiness, as well as the spiritual welfare of the people committed to my charge."

"Of that I am convinced," replied the doctor. "I may, and do sometimes, differ in opinion from you; but I know that your chief object in life is to benefit others, and that, from the happiness you diffuse around you, you derive your own greatest pleasure."

This conversation occurred very shortly after Mary Talbot's arrival at St. David, and before many more weeks had elapsed, Doctor Pendriggen, as was usual with him in the end, confessed to a change of opinion, and acknowledged that the new governess was likely to prove something more than a mere acquisition to the society of the village.

Mr. Sharpe had admired the young lady from the moment of his first introduction to her, and the people of the village thought well of her, though they generally thought her too young and too ladylike for a "school-mistress."

The children of the schools, however, soon became very fond of their new teacher; and perhaps the only persons in the village who did not regard Mary with favour, were the two village schoolmistresses who had the immediate charge of the children, and who were naturally jealous of any interference with their authority, and unable to perceive the object of the rector in placing a governess over them.

Miss Wardour was glad to call Mary to her assistance when she took upon herself the task of superintending the furnishing and interior decoration of Cliff Cottage; and for more than a week the two young ladies were somewhat neglectful of their proper duties, while busily occupied in visiting half the shops of Falmouth, and in choosing carpets and curtains, and linen and crockery ware, and cooking materials, and all the various paraphernalia essential to a widower's, or bachelor's household.

As a matter of course, while thus occupied their conversation frequently turned upon the individual whose anticipated arrival had created such a stir in the usually quiet village, and whom Mary Talbot had never seen.

"We really know very little respecting this gentleman, my dear," said Miss Wardour one day, in response to Mary's inquiries, "though he was my uncle's guest for several weeks. He was shipwrecked on the coast, in the bay yonder, where, up to a few weeks since, portions of the wreck of the vessel in which he was a passenger were still to be seen at low tides.

"He suffered some injury from the wreck, and my uncle invited him to the Rectory rather than he should remain in the 'public'—the only accommodation for strangers that our village affords. He remained with us until he was able to travel, and we found him to be a very gentleman-like, intelligent man, though somewhat eccentric in his manner. When he set out for London he promised to write to us; but we heard nothing of or from him until the other day, when he wrote to say that he had met with some disappointment in searching after his friends or relatives; that he had been ill, and that, as he had been recommended by the doctor who attended him, to take up his residence on the sea coast, he proposed to occupy Cliff Cottage for a season, if it

were still untenanted. I presume he will be here in the course of another week; and now you know almost as much of Mr. Aston as any of us do."

"But what sort of person is he? Is he a young man? Is he rich? And what is he?"

"Four questions at once, my dear," said Miss Wardour, with a smile. "Well, I will reply to them to the best of my ability. He is certainly not a young man, neither is he *un beau garçon* for his years—for which I like him all the better. Still, he is evidently a gentleman, and I believe that he is a rich man. Indeed he showed my uncle several letters from a banker in London respecting the investment of his money, which afforded proof that he is the possessor of considerable wealth. Furthermore, he is an Englishman by birth, who has travelled far and wide, and has resided many years in America, where he married, and where his wife died. He is now a widower, with a grown-up son and daughter who are in America. As to what profession he follows, or has followed, or whence he has derived his wealth, I know no more than you. And now I think I have replied to the best of my ability to all your questions."

"What brought him to England?"

"You are really very inquisitive respecting this gentleman, my dear," replied Miss Wardour smilingly. "If he were a younger man I should not know what to think. Perhaps I might be jealous. But, joking apart, you ask more than I can answer. My uncle suspects that he has come to look after some property of which he has been deprived, or after some relatives or friends. But he was exceedingly reticent while with us respecting the object of his visit to England, though he was communicative enough on all other matters. You have not any relation of whom you have not heard for half a century, who might turn up and bequeath you a fortune, have you?"

"Indeed no," replied Mary, smiling at the idea. "My relations, both on my father and mother's side, are, I believe, all dead long ago. I have no relatives living, to my knowledge, excepting some distant cousins who would not care to acknowledge me in my present humble condition, and whom I do not care to know. So you see I have no other reason than mere curiosity in asking for information about this gentleman."

"Here is Langley's shop," said Miss Wardour; and the young ladies entered a linendraper's shop in the High Street of Falmouth, and were soon deeply engaged in selecting and matching patterns for blinds, window-curtains, etc., etc.; complaining the while of the irksomeness of the task of selecting and purchasing goods for another person, who might not be satisfied with their purchases, yet withal feeling a pleasurable excitement in the occupation of shopping, even though the goods they purchased were not for themselves.

#### CHAPTER XIII.—MR. ASTON LISTENS TO READINGS.

WHEN at length Mr. Aston arrived at St. David his friends found a great alteration in his appearance. He had never entirely recovered from the effects of the injuries he had sustained at the time of the wreck of the Powhattan; and the anxious, hurried life he had since led, the disappointments he had met with in his search after his lost relatives, and the long journey he had undertaken, from London to Cornwall, just after having risen from a sick-bed, at a time when travelling was neither so speedy nor so comfortable as it is at the present day, had told severely upon him. His medical advisers, when they recommended a sojourn by the sea-side, had had no idea that he intended to travel farther than Ramsgate or Brighton, and he reached St. David



so completely exhausted that it was apparent to his friends that if he did not take great care of himself he would soon be again under the doctor's hands.

They advised him to keep himself perfectly quiet at the Rectory for a few days, until he had quite recovered from the fatigues of his journey. He, however, was not the man to heed such advice. Moreover, he was impatient to take possession of his new residence, with which he was perfectly delighted, and, despite the warning of his friends and the protestations of the doctor, he insisted upon removing to the cottage before the newly-repaired dwelling was thoroughly aired. The result was that he was attacked with acute rheumatism, and again confined to his bed.

Unused to confinement—for, until his return to England, he had never had a day's serious illness since his boyhood—he was a most intractable and refractory patient. Accustomed from the days of his childhood to a life of active exertion, he could not endure quietude and repose, and as he was forbidden, and indeed was unable to exert himself in any way, and was prohibited even from reading, time hung heavily and wearily upon his hands, and the man and two female servants, whom Mr. Sinclair had succeeded in engaging for him, had a hard time of it for a while with their new master.

Mr. Sinclair and his curate, and Doctor Pendriggen, of course visited him daily; but the visits of these gentlemen filled up but a small space in the long hours of daylight, and idle hours by day brought restless, sleepless nights, which tended to prolong the disease from which he suffered. At length, however, the doctor pronounced him convalescent. He was permitted to sit up, or recline upon the sofa in the parlour; but still, books were forbidden him, and, except by reading, his condition precluded any method of occupying his time.

The doctor suggested that he might engage one of the village school-girls to read to him.

"Pshaw!" exclaimed the invalid, "I'll have no snivelling school-girl to sing-song to me. That would be worse than the purgatory I suffer."

"Our new governess, or Miss Wardour, would certainly be better adapted to the task," replied the doctor; "but it would not be exactly the thing for either of them to do, even if they were willing."

"I don't want any one to trouble themselves about me," answered the invalid, petulantly; and with this the doctor took his departure. But he had no sooner gone than Mr. Aston, in spite of the restrictions laid upon him, hobbled to the book-shelves, selected a book, and began to read. Very soon, however, he found his head begin to ache, and his eyes to grow dim; the letters seemed to swim before him, and in a rage he flung the book from him, and endangered a relapse through the passion into which he worked himself.

The next day Mr. Sinclair called at the cottage and was admitted by the man-servant.

"How is your master?" he inquired of the man.

"He's in a worser tantrum than ever, I think, sir," replied the servant. "He be in the parlour 'long with the housekeeper."

The rector, who was accustomed to announce himself, stepped towards the parlour, but he stopped short outside the door on hearing the voice of the invalid raised in high altercation.

"You stupid woman!" cried the sick man. "Is that the way in which you have been taught to read?"

"Please sur, aw wun't read at a' never no more," replied the housekeeper; and as she was about to leave the room Mr. Sinclair entered, and inquired after the health of the invalid.

"I'm getting better, if I'm to believe what the doctor says," replied Mr. Aston; "but I'm bored out of my life by the stupidity of the servants." And as he spoke he looked earnestly at his visitor, as if ashamed that the rector had heard his angry voice.

"Pray be seated, Mr. Sinclair," he presently continued. "I'm glad to see you. It's really a charity on your part to call upon a poor querulous invalid like me. Upon my word I think Pendriggen is trying to drive me mad. Here I sit the livelong day, listening to the roar of the sea, like a captive in his dungeon, with nothing whatever to employ my time. I've been trying to get old Margery to read to me, but I'd as soon listen to a cat squalling. I asked Thomas whether he could play chess, and the fellow didn't know what I meant. He said he used to play 'cris-crass' when he were at schule, if that were it—the idiot!"

"Do you play chess?" inquired Mr. Sinclair. "I am very fond of a game at chess, and neither the doctor nor Mr. Sharpe can play the game. My niece plays a little, but it's too serious a game for her. I should be glad to meet an able antagonist, and I shall be very happy to play a game some evening with you, if it will be any pleasure to you."

"No!—would you indeed, though?" exclaimed the invalid, brightening up.

"I shall, really. You *must* be weary with sitting here so many long hours alone, with no one to amuse you or converse with you. Mr. Sharpe, I am sure, will be happy to visit you now and then; and Miss Wardour will call and see you, now that you are able to sit up. I'll tell her, and ask her to bring our new governess along with her. You haven't seen the young lady yet, I think, though you are indebted to her taste as well as to my niece's for the arrangement of your rooms. I'm sure you'll be pleased with her. She reads charmingly too, and I'm sure both Miss Wardour and she will be glad to read to you now and then, if you wish it."

"Doctor Pendriggen was speaking about the new governess yesterday," replied Mr. Aston, who did not seem to entertain the idea that a village school teacher would be a very desirable acquaintance. "Have you changed your schoolmistresses since I have been absent?"

"Oh no. This is a young lady whom I have engaged to *superintend* the schools, and to be a companion and assistant to my niece, who has really more to do than she is able to attend to."

"What is the young lady's name?"

"Talbot—Miss Mary Talbot."

"Talbot! Mary Talbot!" repeated Mr. Aston, starting with surprise.

"You know some person of that name?" inquired the rector, remarking the manner of the invalid.

"I have met with some Talbots," replied Mr. Aston, endeavouring to conceal the agitation the mention of the name had caused.

"Talbot is a good name for a village school governess to bear," he added.

"Yes," said Mr. Sinclair, smilingly; "but we sometimes meet with Howards, and Percys, and Cavendishes among the lowest grades of society. However, Miss Talbot is a lady by birth and education. Both her parents, as I have learnt from a friend—for the young lady never boasts of her family connections—belonged to highly respectable families. Her father was formerly in the navy, and was lost at sea not very long since—in the same gale, in fact, during which you were shipwrecked—while in command of an East Indiaman. The family were reduced to poverty through his loss; the

widow died shortly afterwards, and Miss Talbot—very properly—determined to earn her livelihood by her own exertions, rather than be dependent on the benevolence or charity of others."

"Her parents are both dead, then? Has she brothers and sisters?"

"One brother only—younger than herself."

"She is young, I suppose?"

"About twenty or twenty-one years of age."

"Poor thing! Hers must be an interesting story. I should very much like to see her. You will ask Miss Wardour to visit me, if she will so far favour a crusty old invalid; and tell her to bring this young governess with her."

"I will," returned Mr. Sinclair; "and I think I may promise that you shall receive a visit from both the young ladies to-morrow."

"And don't forget the game at chess."

"Certainly not. You may expect me to-morrow evening. So prepare for defeat. I rather pride myself upon my skill at chess."

Shortly after this Mr. Sinclair took his leave.

"Can it be possible that this young governess is Mary's child?" soliloquised Mr. Aston, as soon as he was left alone. "It will be strange indeed if, after all my vain researches throughout Great Britain, I should find a niece in this secluded village. All that Mr. Sinclair has told me tends to confirm the suspicion that this young girl is the daughter of Lieutenant Talbot. The name is not a common one, and her father was a sailor. I must see the girl; and if she be indeed my niece, I will not yet make myself known to her. I will watch over her; and, if she be worthy of my regard, I will declare myself to be her uncle, and raise her from poverty to her proper position in society. Yet, if this girl be my niece, my sister is dead. Poor, poor Mary!"

Long after Mr. Sinclair had left him, Mr. Aston sat silently recalling the memories of the past; and that evening the servants of the household found a great change in the demeanour of their master. He was kind, and even gentle in his manner towards them; and they began to fear that the change betokened evil, and that he was going to die.

Many a story was told in the kitchen of Cliff Cottage that evening, of the sudden changes that had come over people who had been forewarned that their death was at hand, and the housekeeper declared that she would not be surprised if her master was found dead in his bed in the morning.

"Yet, arter a'," she added, "we may be a troublin' ourselves for nought. T' rector heerd maister grum-pin' at me t' morn, and aw shouldn't wonder if his reverence ha' gin him a bit o' lecture about it."

## PEEPS THROUGH LOOPHOLES AT MEN, MANNERS, AND CUSTOMS.

BY CUTHBERT BEDE.

"Tis pleasant, through the loopholes of retreat,  
To peep at such a world; to see the stir  
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd."

COWPER.

### II.—NEWSPAPER MAGIC AND MODERN WITCHCRAFT.

WHEN Cowper, from the snug Olney parlour, so heartily proclaimed the pleasure of contemplating the world at a distance, and peeping at it through the loopholes of retreat, he had that world's epitome of news spread before him. It was in his day a modest "folio of four pages," which had just been brought to him by the

"herald of a noisy world," the postman, who is even now to be seen in country districts, in form and appearance not much altered from the "light-hearted wretch" who twanged his horn within hearing of the poet of "The Task." But how changed is that newspaper which he carries and delivers! No longer is it a "happy work, which not even critics criticise;" for its contents are conned over and discussed with the most searching criticism, and now and then provide fruitful subjects for legal trials. But while it has grown far beyond the modest dimensions that it bore when Cowper welcomed it to his snug retreat, it has correspondingly increased and improved in all other particulars; becoming a leviathan in power as well as shape; gathering its information from a wider source; producing it in a far more intelligent manner; and disseminating it at a cheaper rate and with wondrous mechanism.

When Cowper received that modest sheet, where-with, as he read it aloud, he held "inquisitive attention fast bound in chains of silence," there were barely, in all England, so many as sixty newspapers. But now, there are more than two hundred metropolitan and upwards of a thousand provincial newspapers published each week. They penetrate into every district throughout the length and breadth of the land; they largely influence the public mind, and thereby shape the course of public events; and they unquestionably exercise an important bearing on national education. The newspaper is the only modern production of literature that is read by thousands of Englishmen, especially in rural districts. And to meet their demands, if not to satisfy their wants, and to instruct them as to their neighbours' doings, there are few villages at the present day, whose noteworthy events are not chronicled in the columns of a local newspaper. This paper, although published in the nearest county town, has, probably, the half of its contents printed in London; for by this method—which supplies similar sheets to a dozen or twenty different towns—the country proprietor is enabled to purchase, at a cheap rate, reams of London prepared journals, the blank half of which he can fill up with local news and advertisements, and sell for a penny a copy, to the mutual advantage of himself and the dwellers in his district.

The specimen of miscellaneous news, criticism, and information that he is thus enabled to set before his purchasers, is undoubtedly a vast improvement on "th' important budget" of Cowper's time. Every rustic who can spell the words of his penny paper is now enabled, by its magic power, to peep through the loopholes of retreat and see how the great world is stirring, and how it fared with far distant nations only a day or two before he handled that precious pennyworth of news. Sitting snugly by his own fireside, and reacting, in however distant a degree, the parlour scene at Olney, he cons the sheet of print, on which, with such wondrous skill, enterprise, and intelligence, the "map of busy life" is brought before him. And when upon that map he meets with the name of Abyssinia, although he may know no more of its geographical position than did the cultivated gentleman mentioned by Mr. Lowe, and though he may never have heard of Rasselas, Father Lobo, Prester John, or even of Bruce the traveller, yet that printed sheet makes him acquainted, through its epitome and digest of news, with what Beke and Baker, Parkyns and Dufton, and others since them have told us concerning that remarkable country and its still more remarkable people. He reads of King Theodore and the captives, and the onward march of Britain's army, and the footing thereby gained for planting among

those nations something more than the flag of conquest, and opening a way for Christian work and civilisation. But "the sound of war has lost its terrors ere it reaches" him; it "grieves, but alarms" him not; for there he is, safe at home, and only taking peeps through the loopholes of retreat at the far-distant arena of strife. Newspaper magic brings it all before him, and then, with a turn of its kaleidoscope, takes him from the din of war to the hum of peace, and gives him peeps at those other varying sights and scenes nearer home that contribute their individual items to constitute the "stir of the great Babel." He roams from Abyssinia to the English House of Parliament, to the record of "the grand debate, the popular harangue, the tart reply;" he wanders from the labyrinth in which he meets the Emperor of the French, the Pope, and Garibaldi, into those stiller scenes where Christian charity walks calmly on, scattering with a liberal hand gifts to the destitute poor at home, to the colliery widows and orphans, or, reaching across the sea, to the sufferers from the West-Indian hurricane. He travels on and "oft turns aside," now to election news and the enfranchisement of working men; now to Fenian murders and riots, or those outrages by London roughs, garotters and street wolves, that make Charles Lamb's "sweet security of streets" a thing of the Elysian past. Now he turns to exposures of workhouse mismanagement; now, to a wail at the high prices of provision; now, to a full report of a cabinet minister's great speech on education; and then, before he has time to pause and reflect how the circles of knowledge are widening and spreading on the great lake of life, he suddenly stumbles on a paragraph headed by the word "Witchcraft."

Surely this must be a heading that is quite out of place, or inserted by mistake, or as a quotation. Alas! no. In the very newspaper which announced the resolutions to be moved by Lord John Russell on the education of the people—the great question of the day—there appeared a saddening narrative of the belief in witchcraft! The more notable was this strange narrative from its occurring in Shakespeare's town; and it was brought to light at the last Warwick Assizes.

It was so recently as the 9th of last November, 1867, that a man named John Davis, living in Stratford-upon-Avon, was committed to gaol to take his trial at the ensuing Warwick Assizes, because he carried out his belief in witchcraft. Day after day, not only he, but his wife and children—as, indeed, they one and all alleged—were tormented by evil spirits, who visited them in the sunlight as well as in the darkness, and tossed them to and fro in the air, and played with them such fantastic tricks as made them unable to sleep or to take a moment's ease. And so, in such an astounding state of things, it had dawned on such intellects as they possessed, that nothing could free them from the persecution of these spirits unless the charm was broken by drawing blood from the witch who had laid them under such spells. But who was the witch? who, but their near neighbour, Jane Ward. Whereupon John Davis lies in wait for her, springs upon her, and, while he holds her fast, takes his knife and inflicts upon her cheek "a frightful gash, full three inches long," which, as a matter of course, "draws blood." This is all that he requires. The "spell is broken," and both he and the various members of his family profess to be "relieved," and even tell that ruthless policeman, who pays them a visit on the morrow, that "they had all slept well and undisturbed, which they had not done while the witch was left unexorcised." But the Stratford-upon-Avon magistrates, not being framed in the Dog-

berry or Justice Shallow moulds, were unable to look upon the occurrence in this happy light, and sent John Davis to the county gaol, where he would have the leisure to ponder on the disadvantage of being behind his neighbours in the march of civilisation.

This leisure time has been extended to eighteen months with hard labour, the sentence accorded at the Warwick Assizes by the judge, who told the prisoner that, had it not been for his previous good character, he would most certainly have been sentenced to penal servitude. Another Warwickshire case of pretension to supernatural powers also came to light in December last, when an old fortune-teller, at the fashionable town of Leamington, was sent to gaol for a month with hard labour. Her "specialty," as the phrase goes, appears to have consisted in her assumed powers "to send sweethearts to young women," and her trade in this respect was so flourishing, that, according to local newspapers, "carriages might be seen waiting after night-fall in the vicinity of her dwelling." The same month of December, 1867, also, through the medium of the magistrates—who, evidently, were not as favourable to the witches as were Lord Bacon and Judge Hale—brought into public notice two decided cases of witchcraft, the one from Durham, where a Mrs. Briggs "drew blood" from a Mrs. Clark with a darning-needle, in order to break the charm of her bewitchment; and the other, in Devonshire, where a professional witch at Plymouth extorted £4 10s. from a stupid farm-labourer, who, when the dearly-bought charms had failed to cure his wife of her paralysis, went to a wizard, "a white witch," as he called him, who supplied him with further potent charms, at a further outlay of money. The Plymouth lady-witch has been passing her Christmas in gaol, and is even now there; for the magistrates sentenced her to three months imprisonment with hard labour.

But, though noteworthy, these cases do not stand alone. For this is an age in which thousands of respectable and (up to a certain point) educated persons can be found to believe in the oracular out-pourings of the retired naval lieutenant "Zadkiel," and his brethren of the craft, who assume the mystic names of Raphael, Orion, and Old Moore, and have dressed themselves in the tattered mantles of Agrippa, Paracelsus, Doctor Dee, Lilly, Cagliostro, Gadbury, Partridge, Poor Robin, Merlin, Mother Shipton, Nixon, Lamb, Forman, and the tribe of Rosicrucians, alchymists, and proprietors of magic crystals, show-stones, philosophers' stones, and elixirs of life. It is an age in which table-turning, spirit-rapping, horoscope-casting, fortune-telling, planet-ruling, and all sorts of conjuring flourish and abound, together with clairvoyants, mediums, Davenport Brothers, astrologers, genethliologists, predicators, and other purveyors of the *vox stellarum*, who, in spite of a cheap press and healthy literature, can boast of annually selling, in this country alone, one million of astrological almanacks published and issued amid the congenial fogs and mists of November.

Since, therefore, superstition and credulity are thus publicly fostered in so many shapes, we can hardly feel it a matter for wonder that they should here and there crop up in the rank growth of old-fashioned witchcraft. To a certain extent, indeed, modern witchcraft differs from that which was so luxuriantly fruitful in the middle ages, when the wizards pretended to raise spirits from whom they could extort the particular object which they or their clients coveted. But the time has gone by when noble and gentle ladies could do openly, and as a matter of course, profess their belief in, and employment



of, witches and warlocks. Three centuries have passed since this was done by the Ladies Buccleugh, Fowles, and Kerr, the Countesses of Huntley, Athol, Angus, and Lothian, and many others, whose witcheries would now be esteemed of a very different nature; and the same distance of time divides us from that period when the punishment of death was first decreed to witches and those who were in league with them, and when the wretched victims of superstition were taken to the stake, there, as their dreadful sentence ran, "to be burned in ashes, quick, to the death."

Happily we live in a milder and more enlightened age; and although the spirit of credulity is not exorcised, yet we have freed ourselves from those grosser and more barbarous surroundings with which it was once evoked. Demonism has dwindled to divination, which, for the most part, is practised and believed in after a very stupid fashion. While mediums, spirit-rappers, magic crystals, and marvellous cabinets have been admitted, among other follies of the day, into west-end drawing-rooms, the witches and their witchcraft are doomed to rusticate among illiterate hinds. Except for specimens of that attractive class of humanity to which the name of "Lancashire witches" has been assigned, we must not now look for our witches and warlocks among the upper ten thousand of society, but we must search for them in country towns and sequestered villages, and there only among the homes of the poorest and least educated. In certain spots of social stagnation we may expect, here and there, to find people who, from superior cunning, have so twisted their ordinary lives as to appear, in the sight of their duller-minded neighbours, to be beings invested with supernatural powers; and, in such cases, these cunning people have probably traded upon the local credulity, and have voluntarily adopted the magical character of "wizard"—which is but another name for "wiseacre"—witch, or fortune-teller; and, for certain fees and rewards, are ready to divine dreams, discover stolen property, cure diseases in man and beast, and impose or remove charms. The month of August, 1863, produced at least two English specimens of the modern belief in witchcraft. There was the Somersetshire case of Ann Hogg, who, in order to obtain what she called "a blood cure," stuck a knife into the back of the reputed witch, and repeated the experiment on the body of the witch's daughter. And there was also the well-remembered Essex case, where "Dummy," the old and eccentric deaf-and-dumb Frenchman, was "swum" by the people of Sible Hedingham for being a wizard and refusing to take a charm from off the village publican's wife; when, being twice thrown into a mill-sludge and barbarously hustled by the mob, he received injuries which terminated, a month afterwards, in his death, and led to the two ringleaders of the mob being sentenced, at the Chelmsford Assizes, to six months imprisonment with hard labour. This was as true a case of "witchcraft" as, probably, ever occurred; for Dummy had, to all appearance, caused the woman's illness and kept her under the "spells" which he refused to take from her, spurning golden bribes and those malignant threats which were, unhappily, carried into execution. The ignorant woman was really bewitched by the fear that the supposed diabolical arts of the old French wizard were potent to produce the sickness into which her frenzied perturbation of mind soon threw her; and, to all intents and purposes, Dummy caused her illness by his self-assumed powers of witchcraft. The catastrophe of his own death was, doubtless, as unlooked-for as it was unintended by the ignorant mob who caused it, and to whom the swimming of a wizard would seem to be

the natural and pre-ordained way for the subjugation of his obstinacy. They thought that they should bring him to do what was required of him by making him a partaker in an experiment through which he would pass harmlessly; but however great the savage fun may have been to them, it proved to be nothing less than death to the supposed frog-eater and wizard.\*

In the autumn of 1866, the credulity of the rustics of Bathampton, near Bath, was evidenced in their persistent belief that the ghost of their recently deceased pastor nightly walked in the village churchyard; nor could this ghost be duly laid until the county police had been summoned to perform the task; albeit, their harmless necromancy resulted in nothing more than the apprehension of—a large white owl. No sooner had this ghostly subject been settled in a common-sense, matter-of-fact way, than a case of witchcraft occurred in the little village of North Leverton, Nottinghamshire, where lived a farmer named Ellis, to whom two men, named Swallow and Bellamy, acted as horse-keepers. Something was amiss with the teams; and Bellamy not only accused Swallow of bewitching the horses but also threatened to bleed him for doing so, and, as a preparatory measure, beat him unmercifully over the head and face with his heavy whip-stock, in order to drive the witchcraft out of him. For this assault Bellamy was heavily fined by the Retford Bench, who declined to recognise his conduct as a vigorous effort to expel witchcraft; although Bellamy sought to justify his act by alleging that his fellow-servant had really bewitched the horses, and that he himself had tried to counteract the witchery by giving the horses dragon's blood and putting a charm in the corner of the stable. He produced two copies of the charm and a tin canister of the magical dragon's blood; the words of the former being these:—"Omnes Spiritus laudent Dominum Misericordiam habere Deus Desinetur Inimicus D. V." In parting from the magistrates, out of pocket but not out of heart, Bellamy delivered to them, as his *ultimatum*, the following decision:—"There's witching the same now as ever there was, only they durst not show it; and there's the same books as there always was;" the books referred to being the charm-books from which the fragment of blundered Latin had been copied "by a man at the railway-station," who had thus brought one of the greatest marvels of modern times into the closest juxtaposition with a degraded relic of mediæval superstition.

Perhaps a superstitious belief in witchcraft is not, at the present day, restricted to any special nooks and corners of our country, but may be as wide-spread as ignorance itself; for the instances here mentioned afford a clear proof that what we usually deem the developments of civilisation have only partially penetrated into rural districts; and that a combination of churches, schools, railways, and penny newspapers, is not yet sufficiently powerful everywhere to sink witchcraft to the bottom of oblivion.

#### MÜLLER'S ORPHANAGES.

The largest orphanage in England is at Ashley Down, Bristol. It contains eleven hundred and fifty children,

\* In the parochial records of Rushock, Worcestershire, it is mentioned, under date of 1690, that "One Joan Bibb was tyed and thrown ynto a poole as a witch, to see whether she could swim. And she did bringe her Act'n ag't Mr. Shaw, the Parson, and recov'rd 10 lb. Damages and 10 lb. for costes." Here the witch had the best of it. But it was a very exceptional case; for while, if she sank and was drowned, she was considered to have thereby proved her innocence; if, on the contrary, she swam, she was usually tried for being a witch, and was burnt, stoned, or otherwise made end of.

and this number will soon be increased to two thousand. This remarkable institution has grown to its present proportions in about thirty years, and its vicissitudes during this period are well known to the readers of the "Leisure Hour." The founder of the orphanage is a

And, while this was going on, he often had not a shilling in the world for himself. For years the life of the young orphanage was a continual struggle, but all the while the orphans continued to increase in number, and, at last, Mr. Müller, seeing the advantage that would



(No. 2.)

ORPHAN HOUSES, ASHLEY DOWN, BRISTOL.

(No. 1.)

Prussian, named George Müller, a minister among the Brethren in Bristol. When he went to Bristol first, he stipulated with the congregation among whom he ministered that he should have no fixed salary—a very singular arrangement considering that he had no means of his own—and it was while he was in a condition of comparative poverty that he projected and commenced his orphanage. From that day to this he has never had a fixed salary, and he has never published any more than the initials of the donors who have supplied him with the means of carrying on the orphanage work. At first he took a few orphans into his own house, No. 6, Wilson Street, Bristol; and people in the neighbourhood, seeing that he was a poor man engaged in a humane work, began to help him; but, as he never had a regular list of subscribers, his means were very fluctuating, and occasionally the funds from which he supplied the orphans with food were completely exhausted. In this, its first stage, the institution was regarded as the work of an enthusiast, who would be sure to break down in the end; and certainly the straits into which he was driven seemed to justify the opinion. But, just as Mr. Müller ought, according to ordinary calculations, to have shut up his institution, he opened a second house, and took in more orphans, although there were no visible means of supporting them. Then he opened a third and a fourth.

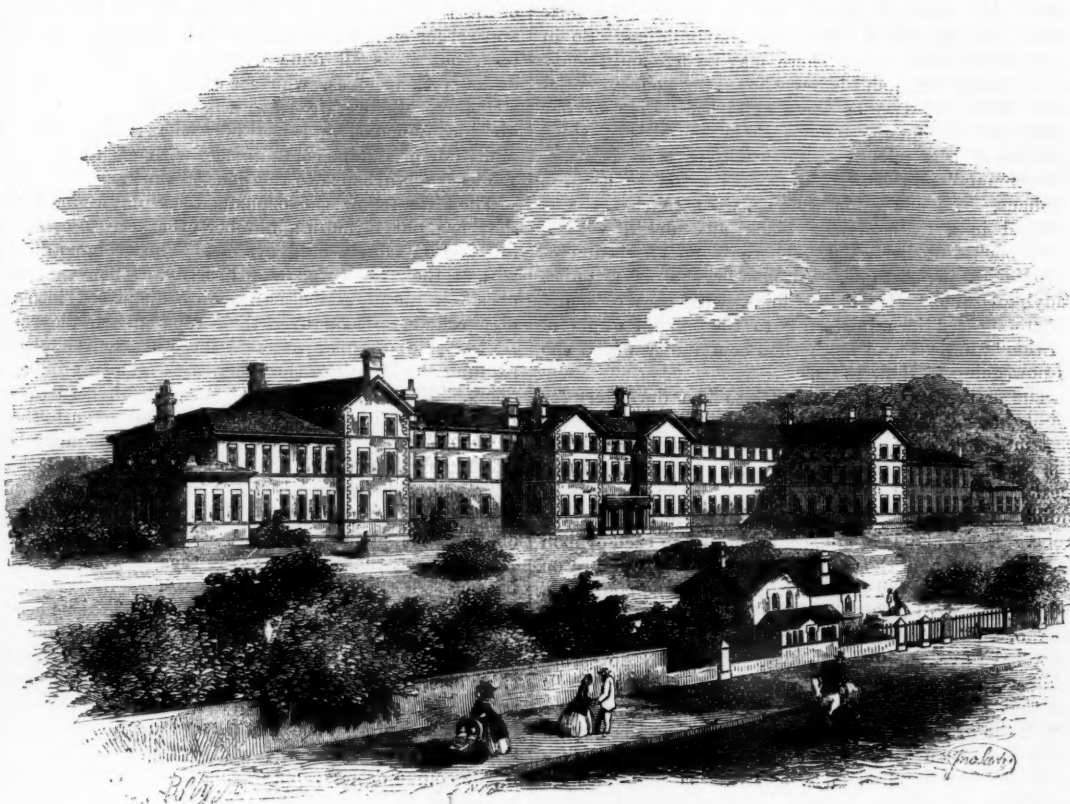
arise from having a building properly constructed for the training of orphans, built a house to accommodate three hundred. This was followed by a second and a third still larger; and to these a fourth and a fifth have now been added, making a total accommodation for two thousand one hundred orphans. This work has cost over a quarter of a million sterling, every farthing of which has been supplied to Mr. Müller without solicitation; and the donations, which have varied from one penny to thousands of pounds in one sum, have never been published in connection with the names of the donors, so that there is no *éclat* to be obtained by giving. It will be seen from this that Mr. Müller is an extraordinary man, engaged in an extraordinary work. He has around him every day at the present time eleven hundred and fifty children, and these, as we have said, will very soon be increased to two thousand. Such an institution must be interesting not only to the philanthropist, but to all who are interested in the difficult question as to what is to be done with the destitute orphan poor.

Mr. Müller is a man of business and system, as well as of faith; and he would require to be systematic in the management of such a vast number of children. He opens each of his three great houses one afternoon in each week, and, taking advantage of this arrangement, we propose to have a peep at the orphanage as it is seen by a visitor.



The houses are called respectively Number One, Number Two, and Number Three—the order in which they were built. Number One contains boys and girls (300); Number Two contains girls only (400); and Number Three contains girls only (450). If we want to see

well-kept flower gardens. At the top of the hill we obtain extensive views over the county of Gloucester, and at no great distance we see the steam and hear the whistle of the locomotives on the South Wales Union Railway, which runs from Bristol to the Channel.



ORPHAN HOUSE, NUMBER THREE.

Number One—in which there are some special features, such as the bakery, which supplies the eleven hundred and fifty children with bread—we must go on Wednesday afternoon. If we want to see Number Two, which contains a nursery, with cots and cradles for the youngest infants, we must go on Tuesday. If we prefer to see the house most recently built, Number Three, we must go on Thursday. No exceptions are made to this order. The educational and other work is disturbed by the presence of the public, and, therefore, only one afternoon can be given up for their admission. If Croesus himself were to apply for admission on any other day he would be politely informed that "no exceptions are made;" and King Croesus need not stay to argue the matter, for no respect is paid to persons. So as this is Thursday afternoon, and as Number Three is open on Thursdays, let us take the legitimate opportunity of seeing this part of the home of the orphans.

At the top of Stoke's Croft, which verges on the old road from Bristol to Gloucester, there is a convenient cab-stand. We hail Jehu, and stepping into the cab we give the brief instruction—"Müller's—Number Three." The next moment we are on our way to Ashley Down, for cabby, who has plenty of customers of the same sort, knows exactly where we want to be set down. After a drive of about a mile we ascend a rather long and steep hill, studded on either side with handsome villas and

Farther on we come in sight of the building we are about to visit—Number Three—and a very large and handsome stone building it is, without a single touch of eleemosynary repulsiveness about it. Number Three is on the right side of the road as we have approached it; on the left are Number One and Number Two; while a large scaffolding points out to us the sites of Number Four and Number Five, now nearly completed. We tell cabby to wait for us (he will have to wait rather more than an hour and a half, as it requires that time to walk through the building), and we ring the bell of the lodge. A pleasant-looking dame admits us and directs us to ring at the centre door. As we pass around the circular lawn we observe that the ground on our left is cultivated and has on it a good crop of potatoes; on the right are other kitchen herbs. We ring as directed, and a lady opens the door, and shows us up a fire-proof staircase to the waiting-room. Before we have arrived a large number of persons, on the same errand as ourselves, have set out with an attendant guide to look over the building, and we must wait a few minutes till a second party is made up. We soon find ourselves surrounded in the waiting-room by a number of people from different parts of the country. One lady has brought with her a large parcel of toys for the orphans, and another has brought presents to a particular orphan. The room we are sitting in is neatly carpeted and has a corniced

ceiling, and at one of the two large tables which are in the apartment there sits a lady who answers very affably such questions about the institution as the curiosity of visitors prompts them to put. We are just getting into a reverie on "individuality," as exemplified in the founder of this beautiful home for orphans, when the door is opened, and a young lady intimates that she will show us over the building. So in a crowd we follow her. There may be five-and-twenty of us, young ladies and ladies who are not young, gentlemen ditto, and two or three children. Five of our party are foreigners, among whom there is a stout gentleman who tells us confidentially that he is "one Frenchman," and has come from London to see the orphans. As our guide leads us, we note that she is dressed in a tastefully-cut black silk dress, with a gold buckle at her waist. There is no affectation of singularity in costume. Altogether she is a quiet, ladylike guide. Her daily life is, with that of many others, passed in ministering to the mental wants of all this fatherless and motherless community which she is now going to show to us.

The first room she takes us into is a dormitory for eighty girls. This room must be something like twenty feet in height, and you feel by the pure sweet air that its ventilation is well attended to. The bedsteads are neat iron ones, and they are covered by the snowiest of quilts. Passing through we come to the girls' wardrobe. Every article of apparel belonging to each orphan is numbered, and there is a corresponding number on the shelves in the wardrobe, so that there is no confusion. "How many dresses have the orphans each?" asks one of the ladies present, and our guide informs us they have five changes of dress, and if they do scrubbing work in the house they have six. She also tells us that they have three pairs of shoes each; and we think the provision as regards wearing apparel is liberal. Then we go on to a second dormitory containing fifty beds for one hundred girls, and this is followed by a wardrobe as before. In each case a teacher's bedroom overlooks the dormitories of the orphans. Then we pass on to a teacher's sitting-room, of which we afterwards see several very neatly furnished, with a few of the freshest of flowers on a table partially covered with books. The place, we begin to recognise, has an air of refinement, and the arrangements all point to health and comfort. Next we advance to smaller dormitories, first for twenty-four girls, then for twenty girls, and the latter has in it servants' boxes containing dresses, etc.; for these twenty are being prepared to be sent out to service. We advance again with our guide, and enter a dormitory for ninety girls, followed by the usual wardrobe, and then come to another for one hundred girls. We have not seen the orphans themselves yet, and as it is only three in the afternoon we do not expect to find them in the dormitories; but we wonder where they are, and as we do so there comes up through the open windows the sound of a vast number of young voices singing a cheery song, with a "tra-la-la" refrain. We advance to the window, and find that it looks out on one of the playgrounds—there are two playgrounds, one for each wing of the building—and that the children having joined hands form two vast circles, and are tripping round the centre swinging pole, to the merry music of their own voices. We listen to their "tra-la-la" for a short time, and then follow our guide down-stairs to the working and educational regions.

We find the schoolroom to be a large apartment hung round with maps and other educational appliances. The girls have been called in from the playground, where

they have been enjoying a short recess, and we find them at their work; for work and education alternate here. There is work at one part of the day, and school at another part, so as to give as much variety as possible. Some of the girls are making shirts for the boys, others are knitting, others are engaged on other useful articles of dress. The making and repairing of the wearing apparel for eleven hundred and fifty children is no light task, but it is all done within the buildings by the orphans themselves, who are aided by competent instructors. Before we leave this room, we look at the girls' copy-books, and see how the teacher and her multitude of pupils communicate with each other with the least disturbance to the general work.

Then we follow the orphans to a play-room, where they are put through a number of exercises, evidently founded on Ling's mild system. The orphans do this part of their work well and heartily. Then they sing us a few pieces, and after they are dismissed into the playground we look over their toys in the playroom. At the side of this apartment there is a long cupboard running the length of the room, with a large number of doors. Here the orphans keep their little treasures—all sorts of little fancy things that have been given to them, or that they have made themselves. One has a toy bed, another a pincushion in the shape of a boot, a little china doll about half the length of a person's little finger, with the satin dress standing straight out from the waist; another has photographs, a box of wooden bricks, etc. Here, in fact, there are as many toys as would set up a bazaar.

But we pass on with our guide, who takes us across the playground, fitted up with swings and springboards, and through the laundry into the washhouse. Here the elder orphans, with hired servants, are washing, ironing, and mangling. An American "ball" washing-machine is in operation, and the clothes are "wrung" by centripetal force in a machine which throws off the water in the course of its rapid revolutions. The best appliances for the saving of labour we note everywhere. Then we go on to the lavatory and bathroom—a large apartment with basins for washing on three sides, a large bath on the fourth side. A numbered bag containing combs and brushes, and a smaller bag containing a tooth-brush, hang over each basin. Next we come to the workroom for girls who are being prepared to go out to service, and you can here choose a servant, if you can satisfy Mr. Müller, who is very particular in selecting places for his orphans, that you are a person likely to give reasonable protection to a girl taken into your service from his institution. We next go on to the kitchen, where tea, which consists of a cup of milk and water and plenty of bread and butter, is being prepared. In this house there are 450 children to sit down, and the preparation of the meal is a matter of considerable labour. One fire, however, cooks the food for the whole of the orphans, and the same fire boils the four huge kettles for tea. From the kitchen we pass on to a second schoolroom, for we are in another wing of the building now, and we again see the orphans put through a variety of exercises. Then we go on to a second playroom with another bazaar of toys. From this we proceed to the storerooms and the cloakroom, the latter containing the winter cloaks of the orphans. We next enter the room in which the orphans are about to sit down to tea. There is a tablecloth on each table, and the elder orphans are preparing for the reception of the 450 who will shortly be here with good appetites. From this room we pass into a corridor in which we see the servants bringing forward from the

kitchen the supplies for tea, and then we take leave of our guide, and quit the building by the same door as we entered it, mentally acknowledging that we have seen a wonderful sight. Every one of the orphans we have seen was taken into the institution absolutely destitute, for no others are admitted; every one is well clothed, well educated for the position she is expected to fill; every one receives a liberal diet, and has her toys just as if she were at home. Nothing can possibly compensate for the loss of father and mother, and no "system" can make a real "home" for an orphan, in the sense in which home is understood by the children of well-to-do parents; but in the Orphan Houses at Ashley Down there is as near an approach to the domesticity of home life as it is possible to obtain in an institution in which there are a large number of children. Once a week the friends of the orphans may visit them, and the children are often taken out for a stroll into the country.

One peculiarity regarding these Ashley Down Orphan Houses is their expansiveness. Under the direction of their founder, George Müller, they have grown into their present dimensions; and, if they continue to expand as they have done, they must in the end include a large proportion of the destitute orphans in England.\* In this aspect they assume a national importance, and make the question of orphanages exceedingly interesting. One great testimony to the efficiency of Mr. Müller's system is the healthfulness of orphans under his care. It is well known that, in foundling hospitals, the mortality caused by the separation of the child from the natural parent is enormous. The mortality in the Ashley Down Institution is exceedingly light. The rate of mortality in healthy towns is seventeen per year for every thousand. In many places this rate is greatly exceeded; but in some of the healthiest towns in England the rate is as low as thirteen. In Mr. Müller's institution the rate of mortality last year was only about ten per thousand, and this very low rate is remarkable, when it is remembered that a large number of orphans are the children of consumptive parents. This is very strong proof indeed that the system pursued at Ashley Down is in its physical results an admirable one, and well worthy of the attention of those philanthropists and humanitarians who interest themselves in the protection and training of the young in all kinds of benevolent institutions.

No influence or interest whatever is required to get a child into Müller's Orphanage. The only conditions are, that the child shall have been born in wedlock; that it is bereaved of both parents; and that it is in needy circumstances. When these conditions are fulfilled, the children are received in the order in which application is made for them, without any sectarian distinction whatever, and without partiality or favour. The annual cost of an orphan is about £12 8s., and the total amount Mr. Müller has received on behalf of his cosmopolitan institution is £259,089 0s. 11½d., an enormous sum, when it is remembered that not a penny has been asked for, and that the names of the donors are not made public. In all its aspects, the institution is extraordinary, and it is especially extraordinary as the work of a humble-minded foreigner who, thirty-six years ago, came to England a stranger, and who remains now, as he was then, a comparatively poor man.†

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

### II.

WHEN, at the age of twenty-three, Abraham Lincoln returned from the Black Hawk war, it was with new aspirations and resolutions. Henceforth he would bid farewell to the toils of the backwoodsman and a life of manual labour, and prepare himself, by reading and study, for taking a part in public affairs. What it was that had brought about this change in his purposes it is of course impossible to say. Whether, like a certain sage of an older time, he had seen "with how little wisdom the world is governed," and had discovered in himself some aptitude for the calling of a senator; or whether the accident of the war, which had brought him into contact with other aspiring and adventurous spirits, had aroused an ambition hitherto dormant in his breast, certain it is that from this time he marked out for himself a new course of life, and set himself to the attainment of objects far different from those which had hitherto engaged his attention. On returning home he suffered himself to be nominated as a candidate for representative in the State Legislature, the election of which was close at hand. He could not hope to be elected, as he was all but unknown beyond his own district; but he probably reckoned on the fact of his being a candidate securing him effectually at some future period. So thoroughly, however, was he appreciated in his own precinct, that of the whole two hundred and eighty-four votes given, all but seven were in his favour. This unequivocal testimony to his worth made him in a manner a political celebrity at once; and in future elections it became a point with candidates to seek to combine his strength on their behalf and secure his battalion of voters.

He now commenced the study of the law, with a determination to qualify himself for practice at the bar. He had no funds wherewith to support himself during the years it would take him to acquire the necessary knowledge; but he had gained some practical skill in land-surveying, and was fortunately enabled to turn that skill to good account. About this time it was that the mania set in, which proved eventually so ruinous to many, for speculation in Western lands; and although Lincoln had neither money nor inclination to embark in such a speculation himself, it was the means of furnishing him profitable employment with the chain and compass. The mania for new settlements spread like a contagion through the State; towns and cities without number were laid out in all directions, and innumerable fortunes were made in anticipation, by the purchase of imaginary properties whose value existed only in the brain of the projector. For nearly five years this delusion lasted, under the fostering care of the rogues who profited by it; and then came the crisis and crash of 1837, which tumbled the whole fabric into dust. But Lincoln had made good use of his time, and when his surveying was brought to an abrupt conclusion, the change served only to excite him to renewed energy in the prosecution of his law studies.

Meanwhile, during his practice as a surveyor, he was elected, in 1834, to the State Legislature, being the youngest member in the assembly, with one exception. His election, which was carried by a large majority, was solely due to character. He had as yet acquired no position—was known only for his straightforwardness and integrity, and in all other respects had his reputation to make. At this time he was very plain in his costume, and rather uncourtly in his address and general appearance. His dress was of homely Kentucky jean, and the

\* There are about 12,000 orphans in the workhouses in the United Kingdom.

† Previous accounts of the Bristol Orphanages will be found in "The Leisure Hour" for January 1863, and in "The Sunday at Home" for July 1869.



impression made by his tall lank figure upon those who saw him for the first time was not very prepossessing. He had not outgrown his hard backwoods experience, or been able to lay aside the unpolished exterior of his earlier days; at the same time his deportment was frank and natural, without a trace of rusticity or awkwardness. During his first session he was for the most part a silent member, contenting himself with watching the proceedings, and thus gaining experience for the future. He manifested, however, an aptitude for business, and was appointed to the second place on the Committee on Public Accounts and Expenditure.

In 1836 Mr. Lincoln was elected for a second time as one of the representatives from Sangamon county; and again he was assigned a place on the Finance Committee. At the two sessions of this legislature, in 1836 and 1837, he spoke modestly, but to the purpose, in the interests of his party, and by degrees came forward more prominently in debate, and ere long became recognised as a leading man on the Whig side. When, in the winter of 1836-37, resolutions of an extreme Southern character were introduced, and, after discussion, adopted by the democratic party, Lincoln, who then little imagined that he was one day to be a chief instrument in the destruction of slavery on the American continent, refused to vote for the resolutions, and exercised his constitutional privilege, along with Daniel Stone, one of his colleagues from Sangamon county, of entering upon the Journal of the House his reasons for thus acting. The protest bears date March 3rd, 1837, and sets forth, among other things, that the undersigned "believe that the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy." The sentiments of Lincoln on this subject, it need hardly be said, underwent little change or modification up to the time of his death.

In 1838 he was for the third time elected a representative in the legislature for the two years ensuing, one of his fellow representatives for Sangamon county being John Calhoun, subsequently notorious for his connection with the Lecompton Constitution. Mr. Lincoln's position was now so well recognised that his party would have voted him to the Speakership; but in the contest that ensued he was outvoted by the partisans of Colonel Ewing, who had been a comrade of Lincoln's in the Black Hawk war. Being now regarded as the champion of the popular cause, and especially as the advocate of all local improvements, he was repeatedly called on to oppose the measures of the democratic party, and almost invariably did so with success. This was the last time that Abraham Lincoln would consent to accept a seat in the State Legislature. First elected at the age of twenty-five, he had continued in office without interruption as long as he chose, and until, by his uniform courtesy and kindness of manner, his marked ability, and his straightforward integrity, he had won an enviable repute throughout the State, and was virtually, when but little past thirty, placed at the head of his party in Illinois. At the close of his career as a State legislator his fame as a close and convincing debater was established. His native talent as an orator had at once been demonstrated and disciplined. His zeal and earnestness in behalf of a party whose principles he believed to be right, had rallied strong troops of political friends about him, while his unfeigned modesty and his unpretending and simple bearing, in marked contrast with that of so many imperious leaders, had won him general and lasting esteem. He preferred no claim as a partisan, and showed no overweening anxiety to advance himself, but was always a disinterested and

generous co-worker with his colleagues, only ready to accept the post of honour and responsibility when it was clearly their will, and satisfactory to the people whose interests were involved. At the termination of this period, with scarcely any consciousness of the fact himself, and with no noisy demonstration or flashy ostentation in his behalf from his friends, he was really one of the foremost political men in the State; while those who knew him most intimately augured for him a far more brilliant future. We must now go back a little in point of time.

During the period of his service in the legislature, Mr. Lincoln was sedulously occupied in mastering the profession of the law. This he was compelled to do in a somewhat desultory manner, at such leisure as he could command, from the necessity he was under, as already stated, to support himself meanwhile by his own labour, to say nothing of the attention which the position he had accepted compelled him to pay to politics. Nothing, however, could prevent him from accomplishing his purpose. He completed his preliminary studies, and was licensed to practise in 1836. His reputation at this date was such, that he found a good amount of business, and began to rise to the front rank in his profession. He was a most effective jury-advocate, and manifested a sound judgment of the turning legal points of a case. His clear practical sense, and his skill in homely or humorous illustration, were notable traits in his arguments. The graces, and the cold artificialities of a polished rhetoric, he certainly had not; nor did he aim to acquire them. His style of expression and the cast of his thought were his own, having all the native force of a genuine originality.

An interesting story is told of one of Lincoln's first essays as an advocate in a criminal court. The only son of a man who had shown him much kindness in his youth was accused of murder. In the district where the crime was committed the prejudice was so strong against the unfortunate prisoner, that it was evident there could be no chance of a fair trial. Lincoln, without being applied to, came forward to defend the accused. He first obtained a change of venue, so that the trial might take place in another county. There he appeared as the prisoner's counsel; and having with much pains made himself master of the real facts of the case, together with evidence to substantiate the same, he was able not only to prove a strong animus on the part of the accuser against the accused, but to show that the former had wilfully borne false evidence from an evil spirit of revenge. The address to the jury on this occasion was characterised by signal eloquence and fervour, and the result was a speedy acquittal of the prisoner, whom the young lawyer had the happiness of restoring—his innocence of the charge completely established—to his widowed mother.

In the year 1837, having gained some repute in his profession, Mr. Lincoln took up his permanent residence at Springfield, the county seat of Sangamon county. For several years he lived the life of a bachelor, and was an inmate of the family of the Hon. William Butler, Treasurer of the State.

In November, 1842, Abraham Lincoln was married to Mary, second daughter of the Hon. Robert S. Todd, of Lexington, Kentucky. Four sons were the fruits of this union, one of whom died in his infancy. The other three, we believe, yet survive.

After his marriage Mr. Lincoln disappeared for a time from the stirring stage of political life, and, in the enjoyment of his domestic happiness, limited his energies to the active practice of his profession, in the pursuit of

which he met with a more than ordinary share of encouragement. His talents were, however, too useful to his party for them to suffer him to remain for an indefinite period in seclusion. He had always been a profound admirer of Henry Clay, and indeed had set that statesman before him as a model for imitation on his first entrance on the political arena. When, therefore, in May 1844, Clay was nominated by the party to which Lincoln was attached, as candidate for the presidency, and at the same time a democrat of ultra principles was put in nomination against him, Lincoln yielded to the demands of the Illinois Whigs, and accepted a leading position as canvasser in behalf of Clay, an office which, however it might prejudice a professional man in this country, never has any such effect in America, where the conditions of political antagonisms differ greatly from those attending the like contests among ourselves. He traversed various parts of the State, attracting large audiences and keeping their fixed attention for hours, as he held up to admiration the character and doctrines of Henry Clay, and contrasted them with those of his opponent. He had always a fund of anecdote and illustration with which to relieve his close logical disquisitions, and to elucidate and enforce his views in a manner intelligible as well as pleasing to his hearers. When he had done all that could be done in Illinois he crossed over to his former State, Indiana, where he was equally well known and appreciated, and, by exerting himself to the utmost, did all that was possible towards turning the tide of battle in Clay's favour. His eloquence and active enthusiasm were, however, in this instance, fated to be of no avail beyond the effect of placing his own reputation as a political orator on a still broader and more permanent foundation. Mr. Clay was defeated, contrary to the hopes and confident expectations of his friends, and much to the chagrin of the intelligent portion of the American people.

In 1846 Mr. Lincoln was elected by a large and unprecedented majority as member of Congress for the Sangamon district. He took his seat in the national House of Representatives on the 6th of December, 1847. Though comparatively a young man he was fully equal to the business of legislation, and at once took a part in the discussion of public matters, never missing a division, and voting on all leading national subjects as he knew Clay or Webster would have voted had they occupied his place. He objected strongly to the conduct of the war then raging in Mexico, and introduced a series of resolutions of inquiry in regard to the origin of the war, which in his opinion "had been unnecessarily and unconstitutionally begun by the President of the United States;" and his first speech—a speech remarkable for its uncompromising frankness and comprehensiveness of view—was on this subject.

The first session of this Congress was prolonged beyond the date of the Presidential nominations of 1848, and the canvas was actually carried on by members on the floor of the House. Mr. Lincoln sustained the nomination of General Taylor, and was equally bold and unsparing in the use of argument and ridicule, and humorous sarcasm, in setting before the people the real issues of the contest. We shall quote a paragraph from one of his speeches at this time, to show the way in which he could handle an opponent when he chose to return a Rowland for an Oliver, and also as a sample of his rough humour.

"I have introduced General Cass's accounts," he says, "to show the wonderful physical capacities of the man. They show that he not only did the labour of several men at the same time, but that he often did it at several

places many hundred miles apart at the same time. And at eating, too, his capacities are shown to be quite as wonderful. From October, 1821, to May 1822, he ate ten rations a day in Michigan, ten rations a day here in Washington, and near five dollars' worth a day besides, partly on the road between the two places. And then there is an important discovery in his example—the art of being paid for what one eats, instead of having to pay for it. Hereafter if any nice young man shall owe a bill which he cannot pay in any other way, he can just board it out. Mr. Speaker, we have all heard of the animal standing in doubt between two stacks of hay, and starving to death; the like of that would never happen to General Cass. Place the stacks a thousand miles apart, he would stand stock-still, midway between them, and eat them both at once; and the green grass along the line would be apt to suffer some too at the same time. By all means make him President, gentlemen. He will feed you bounteously—if there is anything left after he shall have helped himself."

At the close of the first session of this Congress, in August, Mr. Lincoln made a journey to New England, where he delivered some most telling speeches, and spent the remainder of the recess in the West, canvassing for Taylor with redoubled energy among the partisans of Cass, the opposing nominee. This time his unwearied exertions were crowned with success, and he reaped, in the return of General Taylor over all odds against him, a compensation for the defeat of 1844. Returning to Washington in December, Mr. Lincoln resumed his seat in the House, sedulously attending to his public duties until the close of Congress in March 1849. At this date he finished his career as a Congressman, refusing to become a candidate for re-election. It does not appear that he desired or would have accepted any place at Washington among the many at the disposal of the incoming administration in whose behalf he had so zealously laboured. He retired once more to private life, renewing the professional practice which had been temporarily interrupted by his public employment. The duties of his responsible position had been discharged with assiduity, and with fearless adherence to his convictions of right under whatever circumstances. As to deriving any profit, either immediate or remote, from the services he was able to render to his party or his country—the idea seems never to have entered his mind.

#### AMONG THE LAPPS.

##### III.

HAMMERFEST is remarkable as being the most northerly town in Europe, its latitude being 70° 49'; but its surroundings are dreary, and not such as to detain the wanderer, for health or pleasure. It has a considerable trade with Spitzbergen, for which sloops of about thirty or forty tons are fitted out, manned by eight hands. The object of the voyage is the capture of white bears, walrus, reindeer, and eider-down nests. The cost of a vessel chartered for pleasure is about £50 a month. From this latitude the Aurora Borealis presents, at seasons, a magnificent spectacle—stretched across the sky like a rainbow of white light, then varying in form, now dipped in the colours of the bow, now broken into a golden shower, again shaped like an outspreading fan, or changing with weird-like mystery, as if the plaything of the spirits of the North.

The North Cape is about 91 miles from Hammerfest; but, apart from the fact that it is the North Cape,

presents little of interest in the way of scenery. The Cape is 935 feet high, and forms part of the island of Magerøe, a desolate moorland tract, all the romance of which must centre in the royal eagle or the free falcons. The sun is visible at the North Cape for about eight weeks, and at Hammerfest for about six weeks, day and night without intermission.\*

Driven from Hammerfest by the aroma of oil, and discarding all phantasies of visiting Spitzbergen, we returned from the North in the same steamer. On our southward journey we stopped at Tromsø, to see the first ordination conducted by Bishop Gisleen, the new chief pastor of this the most northerly of the five dioceses of Norway, who had been our fellow-traveller in our passage northward. The church was crowded, and the ceremony interesting. The Bishop preached a most appropriate sermon, full of the distinctive doctrines of vital Christianity. He was a man of an excellent spirit, with a calm depth of religious feeling, and anxious for the welfare of his diocese. I had much pleasant intercourse with himself and his wife, who was known in Norwegian circles as the translator of several works, and the authoress of some religious poems. On parting with them, he wrote in my Norwegian Testament the text Gal. iii. 28, "In Memoriam Knud Gisleen, Bishop of Tromsø. June 25, 1856." Beneath is the autograph of his wife, "Henriette Gisleen," who gave me a small marker, composed of flowers, with the writing, "In die Bibel zu legen bei Joh. xiv. 27." When in Norway in 1864, it was with sincere regret that I heard they were both dead; their memories are much respected.

It was the 9th of July, 1856, when we reached Kaafjord, the station for Bossekop, where are the copper works, now under English management; and the river Alten, famous for its splendid salmon fishing. We parted with many of our passengers, who had been to Hammerfest to record their votes; but in their stead we received fresh accessions. After we had left the fjord, I rambled about the ship, and was surprised at beholding some strange figures who had lately come on board huddled together in the bows. They seemed to be short in stature, with an oblique cast of eye, a square-built face, with low forehead, and something of the look of the Bushmen, or Root-diggers of the Pampas. They were curiously clad in skins, which I recognised as those of the reindeer. But one feature could not escape notice: not only had each one his feet chained together, but round the necks of several were large heavy iron collars, firmly riveted, so that it was impossible for the wearer to divest himself of his load at any time. The groups attracted my attention; I pronounced them to be Lapps; and, as they had been sent on board at Kaafjord, I conjectured that they might possibly be some of the very men who had taken part in the riot at Kauto Keino in 1852. On inquiry from Mr. Vosslef, my conjecture proved to be correct, and they became a source of increased interest. There was one man among them who arrested our attention: the very expression of his face was stubbornness and unhumiliated self-will; he sat crouching with his knees together, and his head leaning on them, careless of being the observed of many observers. A vacant look of blighted hopes, withal, was visible in his expression, though his neck was iron and his brow brass. This man's name was Aslak; and, during the four years which had passed since the outbreak, he had never shown the least sign of contrition or remorse. It was difficult to hold any conversation with these people, as their *patois* would be almost unintelligible to a Norwegian. I endeav-

oured, however, to establish communication with them by the help of Mr. Vosslef, who did not leave the steamer until Gildeskal.

Strange that he who had been once their victim should meet them in this casual manner four years afterwards under such altered circumstances. Having borrowed a Finnish Testament, I went near them and read, first, that exquisite passage in the third chapter of St. John's Gospel: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." It was no slight privilege to rehearse these words of eternal life in the ears of these degraded outlaws, whom human justice had sentenced to bonds and imprisonment during the term of their natural life. After this I read the three last verses of the first chapter of St. John's first Epistle, and a portion of the third chapter of the Ephesians. It was very difficult to extract much from them, owing to their dialect, and not being myself a fluent scholar in Norsk. I gathered, however, that all, except the one named above, were penitent, and regretted their past conduct. These unhappy men were now being taken far from Arctic regions, hundreds of miles away to Christiania, the capital, to finish, it might be, their lives, in the sweat of their brows and amid the clank of chains. And yet even these, notwithstanding their degeneracy and low rank in the scale of society, had had glowing memories in earlier life. Some of these men were husbands, some were fathers, and surely their hearts had some time beaten with a quicker throb to the inspiration of such ties.

In order to see the effect of kindness—that key which unlocks the human heart—I went to the steward and ordered some coffee for these poor creatures; and it did one's heart good to behold their pleasure and gratitude. They lay there huddled together for the five days of our voyage, until we reached Drontheim, without comfort or shelter, their only pleasure arising from the gift of some tobacco from some stray passenger. As the steamer remained two days at Drontheim, we were obliged to disembark; but on our return we found our unfortunate Lappish fellow-travellers still on board. Their next destination would be Bergen, where they would change steamers, in order to round the Naze, en route for Christiania.

It appeared strange that in our wanderings three years previously we should have met Mr. Vosslef in the Sogne Fjord; then that we should have encountered his brother, the sufferer in the tragedy of '52; and, further, that we should have accidentally selected the very steamer for our return, which gave us as fellow-passengers the very actors themselves. But we are nearing Aalesund, where we are to disembark. Before leaving I went to the bows of the steamer to bid them farewell, and before long the smoke in the dim distance announced to us their southerly course for their distant destination.

Although, as we have already stated, the generality of Lapps in Norway profess the Lutheran religion, attend "preaching" as opportunity offers, and have their children baptized, yet no doubt many vestiges of pagan manners and superstitions would be found if their interior life were better known. They appear formerly to have worshipped a deity under the name of *Iremala*, who was probably the same as Thor, or Stourra Passe, who was represented under the figure of a stone. The latter was a familiar household deity, every family having some stone with a supposed resemblance to a human being, which they worshipped. The stone,

\* A paper on the "Midnight Sun," by the author of these articles, appeared in the "Sunday at Home" for June, 1864.



which was usually a large one, was placed upon a pile of reindeer horns, while around the centre one were others of various sizes, which were honoured as the wife and children or servants of the presiding deity, according to their scale of magnitude. A Frenchman, by name Regnard, who travelled in Lapland in 1681, mentions having seen stones like these, which he declares were secretly worshipped by the Lapps, although they were nominally Christians. In their rites a sacred drum figured largely, which, as they had no official priesthood, might be inquired of by any private worshipper. This drum was made of the hollow trunk of a pine or birch tree, and was covered with skins. A variety of brass rings were placed on the drum, which was beaten with a hammer made of the horn of a reindeer; and, according to their movement to the left or the right, and their ultimate position, were the responses of the oracle favourable or the reverse. Divine honours were likewise paid to the sun, as in Persia and Peru; to the souls of the dead; and to aerial spirits, called *Irchles*, for whom they provided refreshments in baskets hung upon branches of trees. When a man died, they used, like the ancient Danes and Saxons, to bury his hatchet and warlike instruments with him—a practice common to many of the heathen nations of the world. The records of every unenlightened nation are the same: though varying in customs and superstitions, yet a monotony of folly, inconsistency, and ignorance stamps them all as the product of fallen human nature; which, though in its fears craving for something to worship, cannot, nevertheless, without revelation, rise to the conception of a pure, holy, and reasonable object of worship.

## Original Fables.

BY MRS. PROSSER.

### THE OLD BEE'S HINT.

"WHAT! on a dandelion!" exclaimed a young Bee to an old one, in surprise and contempt.

"Why not?" said the old Bee; "do you suppose honey is to be found only in roses? If you do, learn this: honey is honey wherever it comes from, and there's no flower so humble but a little painstaking may get some out of it. I am not ashamed to confess that I have made a more profitable visit to this homely dandelion than I have idly done to many a splendid exotic. Besides, more depends on the way we use our opportunities than on the opportunities themselves."

### UNDERSTANDING A HINT.

"It's time to go," said the Swallows to the Starlings.

"Why?" said the Starlings; "winter is not come yet."

"No," said the Swallows, "not come exactly; but there have been chilling winds and gloomy skies frequent of late, and we prefer leaving with this gentle hint, to being starved or stormed out."

### WHERE IT COMES SHARP.

"WELL! that is surprising!" said a young Jackal to his mother. "I have seen the hunters rattle balls from their rifles against that elephant, and they fell from his tough hide like hailstones; and those flies have actually made him caper about quite in a fury!"

"Ah, son!" replied the old Jackal, "the secret is, that the flies have found out where his skin is thin; most of us have a tender spot somewhere; and even an elephant, when that is touched, feels the bite of a contemptible fly more than he would the stoutest rifle where he is invulnerable."

### NOT ALWAYS FLATTERING TO BE "LET ALONE."

"THEY never shoot us," said an old Crow to a Partridge, that after a flight of terror from a murderous gun had escaped to a quiet spot where some crows were feeding. She did not

answer, but cowered beneath the long grass, still panting with alarm.

"I say," said the old Crow, sidling up to her, "they never attempt to shoot us."

"Don't they?" said the Partridge.

"No; I can't think why. We are very handsome, and very useful, and highly respectable. I can't think why they let us alone, and are so fond of shooting you," said the old Crow, with an inquisitive look.

"Ah—I didn't know there was any difficulty about it. Are you not carrion?" said the Partridge.

"Caw, caw!" said the old Crow, "that didn't strike me!"

### UNDER A SLIGHT MISTAKE.

"WELL! there's a great deal in knowing one's self," said Grim the yard-dog to a poor half-starved Cur that ran in and out by sufferance and picked up a bit of a bone as he could.

"Oh, yes, sir, I quite agree with you; only sometimes, as in my case, there's nothing worth knowing," said the Cur.

"Self-knowledge," observed Grim, "saves us from conceit. It is quite sad to observe the mistakes people make through ignorance."

"Well, there's a great advantage that way in being poor; for nobody flatters the poor, so they are in less danger of being conceited," remarked the hungry Cur.

"True," replied Grim; "but there's Mopsy—did you ever notice her? She is so self-satisfied, so full of admiration of her charms, she can hardly walk."

"Ah, she is very pretty indeed; I suppose her head is a little turned. Now there, you, sir, see the advantage of being ugly, for the ugly, like the poor, have no flatterers. So we—"

"We!—ugly! What do you mean by your impudence!" said Grim, showing his teeth. "I should hope I am as handsome as she is any day, only my beauty is of a different kind."

"Ah, yes, to be sure, sir—I hope no offence—only hers is a more common sort of beauty that strikes everybody, you see," said the Cur, in a fright.

"True; mine, I admit, is more refined, severe, and classical—greatly, you see, to be preferred to hers."

"Oh, no doubt, sir," said the Cur, much relieved to see the turn things had taken, for he had been afraid of entire banishment from the yard.

"And yet," continued Grim, "I never strut, nor assume airs. No! Aware of what I am, I am satisfied with the silent homage that I am sure I must receive from all competent judges; and were I to be petted and praised to the full as much as Mopsy, I should not be lifted a hair'sbreadth in my own esteem, so thoroughly do I know myself."

"Ah, self-knowledge is a fine thing indeed!" cried the Cur, "and I'm quite convinced by what your worship has said, that it's a very wise dog indeed that arrives at it. As for my poor self, I shall henceforth make sure of nothing concerning the subject, but that I am nearly always hungry—a fact that admits of no mistake."

### THE DISCONTENTED CROW AND HER WISE NEIGHBOUR.

"Oh, dear! how tired I am," said a Crow, as she rested from building, and rooked gently backwards and forwards on the tree-top beside a neighbour.

"Don't you wish," she said again, "don't you wish you were a raven? Great and strong he is; never can feel tired as we do, I'm sure."

"I don't want to be a raven, though," replied her neighbour; "the sound of his voice frightens folks terribly; I shouldn't like to be feared and shunned."

"Well, no—that's true; but I should like at least to be a rook: they are so aristocratic. Wouldn't you rather be a rook? we are very vulgar in comparison, you must own."

"Rooks?" answered the neighbour; "rooks get shot and put into pies. No; I'd rather be a vulgar live crow than a genteel baked rook."

"I forgot that," said the Crow; "but I really should like to be a magpie; they are so handsome and so swift of flight."

"Should you?" said the neighbour; "I wouldn't be branded as a thief and a busybody, the very tip-top of all mischief, as she is, to be ten times as handsome. Why, the folks go about destroying her nest wherever they find it, because she is so good for nothing."

"Certainly, certainly; I agree with you her nest is never safe; but as to that, neither are ours. A storm comes, and

then where are we? The jackdaws are the best off. Nobody disturbs them, the wind cannot reach them, and their nests never want repairing. Oh, I wish I were a jackdaw, don't you?"

"What!" cried the neighbour, weary of her complainings; "would you like to spend all your life in the gloom of the old church tower, gliding in and out of a hole all day long, instead of roosting about in the breeze on this glorious green tree? Not I! Ravens and rooks, and pies and daws, are heartily welcome to all their advantages. I envy none of them; but, taking the bad and good together, am quite satisfied that no lot can beat the lot of a crow."

#### SOFT WORDS AND HARD DEEDS NOT PLAIN TO RECONCILE.

"I hope I don't disturb you, ladies and gentlemen," said a powerful young Horse, galloping at the top of his speed through the meadow, and scaring all the sheep into a corner.

"I hope I don't disturb you, friends," he cried again, as he coursed all round, and hunted them from their rest in his wild pastime.

"I trust I don't disturb you, dears," he shouted, as he sent them flying a third time from the terrors of his reckless racing.

"What does he mean by his 'hopes,' and his 'trusts,' and his 'friends,' and his 'dears?'" said an old sheep, when they had huddled together in the ditch to be safe out of his way; "he might content himself with frightening us out of our wits without insulting us with his impertinent falsehoods."

#### NOTHING TOO BAD FOR A TRAITOR.

"What's up now?" said Bolt, the poacher's dog, to Snatch, his companion.

"Why, it looks as if—yes, *positively* they are! Bolt, would you believe it? they are going to hang Drover."

"What! the shepherd's dog?" asked Bolt, running to the top of the bank to see.

"Ay, to be sure. Well, well, and all he did was to worry a lamb or two; if that isn't a shame!" said Snatch.

"A shame? No shame at all; he richly deserves it," said Bolt.

"Ahem," said Snatch; "I should like to know how long your neck and mine would be if they had been stretched every time we had made free with a lamb?"

"We! we are thieves, known, professed thieves, and if we allow ourselves to be caught, let them hang us: it's all fair that they should; but wasn't that fellow put over the flock to preserve it from us and all other enemies? Wasn't he trusted, fed, housed, and honoured as a faithful servant and friend? I say hanging is too good for him; he ought to be shot first and hung afterwards."

#### NOT ALWAYS FAIR TO JUDGE OF OTHERS BY OURSELVES.

Nobody could think what made Mr. Pug, the new pet's, nose so black.

"I know what it is," said Miss Floss, the lapdog; "he's been upsetting the ink, that's it"—a severe beating for doing the same in her lady's boudoir being fresh in her memory.

"No, miss, it's not that; he's been routing among the pots," said the turnspit, who often got a kick and a cuff from cook for meddling with her affairs in that way.

"You're wrong, both of you," said Grumps, the old house-dog, who was renowned for his surliness; "it's his bad temper—they've all settled in his face; bad tempers always make black looks!"

#### ABUSE OF PRIVILEGE.

"Don't cut me down! Consider how old I am," said the Tree to the Woodman, who stood to deliberate, and replied—

"Old? well *that* you are, but are you sound?"

"Sound? there's not a bit of good timber in me, and hasn't been for years. I'm little else but touchwood," said the Tree.

"Well, but I suppose you will put out leaves to look pleasant in the summer?" said the Woodman.

"Leaves! alas no leaves have I put forth for many summers," cried the Tree, "I am so *very* old!"

"Is that it? then down with you. It's plain, if there's no hope of getting use or ornament from you, you ought to give place to others; you've been on the ground long enough."

## Varieties.

**THE POPE'S CURSE.**—The Archbishop of Paris, in a recent speech in the French Senate on the Roman question, observed that if the Pope was obliged to quit Rome and wander through the world as a pilgrim, "the earth would tremble beneath his footsteps, and his words would be maledictions." In plain English, if turned out of Rome, the Pope would go about the world cursing! The following is the substance of "the Pope's dreadful curse, as being the form of excommunication of the Church of Rome." We quote it as given by Dr. Keith (from Harleian MSS., vol. viii. pp. 553-5), in his "History and Destiny of the Church and the World." "By the authority of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and of the holy canons, and of the undefiled Virgin Mary, the mother and patroness of our Saviour, and of all the celestial virtues, angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, powers, cherubim and seraphim, etc., we excommunicate and anathematise him or them; and from the thresholds of the holy Church of God Almighty we sequester them, that he or they may be tormented, disposed, and delivered over with Dathan and Abiram, and with those who say unto the Lord, 'Depart from us, we know not thy ways.' And, as fire is quenched with water, so let the light of him or them, for evermore, unless it shall repent him or them, and they make satisfaction. Amen. May the Father, who created man, curse him or them. . . . May all the angels and archangels, principalities and powers, curse him or them. . . . May the heavens and earth, and all holy things remaining therein, curse him or them. May he or they be cursed, wherever he or they may be; whether in the house, or in the field, or in the highway, or in the path, or in the wood, or in the water, or in the church. May he or they be cursed in living, in dying, in eating, in drinking, etc.; in the faculties of their body—inwardly and outwardly—in their brain—their head—their nostrils—their heart—their veins. . . . May he or they be cursed in all their joints, from the top of the head to the sole of the foot. . . . May the Son of the living God, with all the glory of his majesty, curse him or them; and may heaven, with all the powers which move therein, rise up against him or them, to damn him or them, unless it shall repent him or them, or that he or they shall make satisfaction. Amen." Dr. Keith quotes this Pope's curse in illustration of that trait in the prophetic character of the pretended vicar of Christ, when it is said (Rev. xiii. 11-18), "He had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."

**THE SERJEANT-SURGEONCY TO THE QUEEN.**—The appointment of serjeant-surgeon is one of great antiquity. One of the duties is to be in attendance on the king when he ventures to battle, and the earliest record of this appears when John of Arderin, in 1349, accompanied Edward III to the Battle of Crecy. The office of serjeant-surgeon was not, however, confirmed until 1461, when William Hobbys was appointed, with a salary of forty marks yearly. There were several perquisites attached, such as drawing a certain amount of wine from the king's cellars, the right to all the fine linen stained with the royal blood, and, during war, to take prisoners, retaining the amount of ransom paid for them. The surgeon to the sovereign was, moreover, the twelfth person in rank, and took precedence accordingly. Abroad the surgeons filling this appointment were treated with distinguished consideration, as, on the death of the sovereign, they were beheaded and buried with that potentate. Thus it appears that Austrigilda, wife of Gontram, King of Burgundy, had, in compliance with her dying request, her two physicians slain and buried with her. The chronicler adds that these were probably the only two medical gentlemen ever privileged to lie in the tombs of kings.

**THE ISLE OF DOGS.**—This island, formerly a waste swamp, has for many years been the scene of busy manufacturing industry. Here, in the various departments of iron-ship-building, are congregated several thousands of the most skilled and intelligent artisans and labourers. The terrible distress prevailing this winter in the east of London is sorely felt in the Isle of Dogs. An impression has gone abroad that much of this distress has been the result of trades union agencies. Knowing the facts of the case, we can affirm that this is a mistake, no strike having taken place for years. The men, with proper independent feelings, shrink from mere charity, but are appealing to the public to help them to employment to support themselves and their families, even at greatly reduced wages. In the true spirit of co-operation they are willing to give their labour at rates enabling Thames ship builders to compete with those on the Tyne, Wear or Clyde.